



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



2018 IMPROVING VETERANS CARE CONFERENCE

The Yankton Rural Area Health Education Center (AHEC), in coordination with the Sioux Falls VA Health Care System, is pleased to announce the 2018 Improving Veterans Care Conference will be held in Sioux Falls on Friday, May 11, 2018. This one-day conference will be held from approximately 9am-4:30pm at the University Center in Sioux Falls. This year's topics include Military Sexual Trauma, Suicide Prevention, and Opioid Addiction.

This conference is of interest to clinicians involved in the care and support of veterans/service members and/or their families. It is recommended for psychologists, counselors, therapists, social workers, addiction and prevention professionals, clinicians, educators and others.

Click here to register for the conference:

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/YanktonRuralAHEC/2018ImprovingVeteransCareConference>

For more information or questions, please contact Yankton Rural AHEC at 605-655-8285 or info@yrahec.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

VA Open Application.....	2
BHNC To Honor Veterans.....	3
SFVAHCS Town Hall	3
Working Indian Country	4
AL Post 164 Honors Veterans	5
VA Whole Health	6
Operation Engage America	7
State Engineers	7
Beadle County Honors Veterans	8
USD Student Studies Veterans.....	9
Upcoming Events	10

Register

Today

**Improving
Veterans Care
Conference
May 11, 2018**

Click here to register
or contact Yankton Rural AHEC:
(605) 655-8285



One-day conference held at Sioux Falls University Center



Sioux Falls
VA Health Care
System



South Dakota Veterans will join Governor Dugaard at a signing ceremony for SB 91 on Monday, March 26, at 1:30 pm in the Capitol Rotunda.



VA OPEN APPLICATION SHAPES NEW DIRECTION

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that to further accelerate the benefits of the VA Open Application Programming Interface (API) pledge, Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs David Shulkin has asked Dr. Rasu Shrestha, chief innovation officer at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, to lead the initiative.

"I am excited to see this vision become a reality, and am actively seeking other health-care systems to join our pledge, and ask developers to take part in our Lighthouse Lab, so we can shape a new direction for health care together," Shulkin said.

The API pledge encourages health-care providers to commit to work collaboratively with the VA to increase the mapping pace of health data to industry standards, including the current and future versions of Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR).

Considered the "front door" to VA's vast data stores, Lighthouse is the department's application programming interface management platform, and functions similar to a waiter's role in a restaurant — the critical link communicating orders to the "kitchen." For the VA, the kitchen is the system that will prepare the order then deliver it back to the waiter, or API.

The coalition effort includes key stakeholders across the industry to elevate electronic health record (EHR) interoperability and realize the potential of the Open API Pledge to accelerate the design, testing and implementation of the Argonaut Project implementation guides of the FHIR API.

Shrestha added, "There is no moment greater than now for the industry to step up and make their voices heard to push towards real and meaningful interoperability. This is an important moment for the private sector to answer the Secretary's call and work with our vendors to make information flow and use as freely accessible as possible to make care safer and better for veterans."

Pledgees will meet for the first roundtable discussion in April and commit to working with the VA and standards community to implement the existing Argonaut implementation guides. The organizations will participate in testing draft specifications for scheduling, clinical notes, questionnaire and encounters, as well as implement access standards for veterans, clinicians and the care teams that serve them.

Stephen Klasko, president and CEO of Thomas Jefferson University and Jefferson Health and current pledgee, said, "Just as our veterans deserve the best technology when they are defending our country, they deserve the best health-care technology when they return. Dr. Shulkin's leadership in assembling the open API pledge is not only important for veterans but is an important first step in creating seamless electronic records for all U.S. citizens."



VIETNAM VETERANS TO BE HONORED

The Black Hills National Cemetery and the VA Black Hills Health Care System will honor the service, sacrifice, and enduring achievements of the Armed Forces in a 50th Anniversary event. The event will commemorate Vietnam War Veterans and include a pinning ceremony to all Vietnam Veterans in attendance.

The Vietnam War 50th Anniversary commemoration ceremony will be held at the Interment Shelter at the Black Hills National Cemetery on Thursday, March, 29, at 9:00 am (MT). This special ceremony will thank and honor Veterans of the Vietnam War.

Lapel pins will be presented in a dignified manner to each Vietnam Veteran during the event, and include accompanying remarks to reflect the nation's thanks for their service and sacrifice.

SFVAHCS HOLDS VETERAN'S TOWN HALL

SDDVA's Program Manager Erin Bultje attended SFVAHCS Veteran's Town Hall this week. Director Goodspeed briefed veterans and partners on the numerous construction projects going on, including the fifth floor renovation to surgical rooms and minor procedure rooms. He also reiterated the VA's focus on suicide prevention and noted that the VA was providing gun locks.

Goodspeed also noted that providers will be talking and asking more questions during appointments.

Veterans were also provided updates on RAMP, appeals and Decision

Ready
Claims.

The
Town Hall
closed
with
recogni-
tion of the

Vietnam Veterans. Pins and certificates were given to those in attendance.



WORKING IN INDIAN COUNTRY

The "Working In Indian Country" tribal relations workshop held at the Crazy Horse Memorial on March 7th was significantly impacted by the March 5th and 6th winter blizzard. As a result, they had numerous cancellations due to road and weather conditions. Therefore, they have decided to schedule another session in Pierre on May 17, 2018, to accommodate those who could not attend.

The workshop will be held at the Pierre Chamber of Commerce (800 W. Dakota Avenue). Space is limited to approximately 40 participants to enhance opportunities for discussion and dialogue.

Working In Indian Country: Building Successful Business Relationships with American Indian Tribes, is being offered in partnership with the Association on American Indian Affairs and LDK Associates, LLC (Working In Indian Country).



"Working In Indian Country: Building Successful Business Relationships with American Indian Tribes"

Who Should Attend?

Local, state, and federal government officials and business leaders who have a desire or are required to work with American Indian tribes

Registration materials can be found at: <http://www.workinginindiancountry.com/>.

Registration fee is \$325.00 and includes a copy of Larry Keown's award winning book "Working In Indian Country," reference guide (PowerPoint presentation), participant materials, lunch, and refreshment breaks. A portion of the proceeds will go to the Association on American Indian Affairs (<http://www.indian-affairs.org/>) to support their programs.

Go to <http://www.workinginindiancountry.com/registration-and-scheduling/> and register today!

For more information please feel free to contact Larry Keown, Instructor and Facilitator, at lkeown@ldkassociates.com or 307-751-0540.



AMERICAN LEGION POST 164 BIRTHDAY BALL

American Legion Post 164 of Spearfish dedicated a segment of their American Legion Birthday Ball last weekend to honoring World War II Veterans. This was their third annual ball.

Lawrence County VSO Jesse Ketzer and SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman had the distinct honor to recognize and honor six World War II Veterans and present them with their WWII Medal.

Kudos and special thanks to Fred Nelson, American Legion Post 164, and all their partners for a great ceremony.



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**Veterans Health Administration
Office of Patient Centered Care and
Cultural Transformation

Please Join Us For An Introduction to Whole Health

What is this?

- This introduction to Whole Health session is designed to introduce you to the VA Whole Health approach to care.
- Transitioning from the Service can pose unique challenges and opportunities and we'll discuss why a whole health approach is helpful in meeting these challenges and capitalizing on your opportunities.
- Through our programs and services and, most importantly, your own strengths and abilities, we will work together in a healing partnership to optimize your well-being with a focus on what is important to YOU.
- We'll also describe areas of self-care and well-being that make up all the different aspects of who we are as individuals.
- Our number one goal is that you accomplish the mission you create for yourself.



What is Whole Health?

- Whole Health recognizes you as a whole person and helps support your unique answer to the question, "What would you do if your health were the best it could be?"
- Whole Health goes beyond your illnesses, injuries, or disabilities.
- It focuses on your values and aspiration, your health and well-being and includes self-care and complementary therapies (such as acupuncture, massage, and yoga), along with your conventional medical care.
- In Whole Health care, you are a more active partner with your health team.

Date and Time: The first Friday of each month from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

The third Saturday of each month from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location: Sioux Falls VA Health Care System, 2501 W. 22nd Street, Sioux Falls, SD
First Floor, Building 52, Integrative Health Building, Room 107. Please ask for
directions at front entrance desk.

For questions and more information, contact:

Connie Denevan, Whole Health Coordinator, at 605-336-3230, extension 9-7736



OPERATION ENGAGE AMERICA

SDDVA Program Manager Erin Bultje attended Operation Engage America (Support Siouxland Soldiers) event in Sioux City, Iowa this week. Wearing both hats, she promoted South Dakota Joining Forces and SDDVA.

Operation Engage America's mission is to connect, engage, and educate veterans, transitioning service members, first responders and their families.

This "Support Siouxland Soldiers" not only provided informative resources but also a food and clothing drive and a hot homemade meal for those in attendance.



HISTORY, IT'S WHO WE ARE

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman met this week with State Engineer Stacy Langdeau and her staff to discuss the new State Veterans Cemetery.

Langdeau presented Zimmerman with architectural drawings of Building II at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home.



BEADLE COUNTY HONORS WORLD WAR II VETERANS

Beadle County Veterans Service Officer Taylor Jans hosted a wonderful program this week to honor World War II Veterans.

SDDVA's Secretary Zimmerman and Field Officer Kevin Bowen had the distinct honor to assist and recognize these great heroes and present them with their WWII Medal.

Kudos and special thanks to Taylor for a job well done.



USD POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT FOCUSES STUDY ON VETERANS

University of South Dakota Political Science Student Jordan Hanson of Watertown, embarked upon a three-credit-hour independent study during her Spring Semester this year. The title of the course was “Coming Home: South Dakota Veterans Return.”

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus observed that “No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it’s not the same river and he’s not the same man.” Over the years, America’s combat veterans have lived through that double-change. The transition is not only military science and history and sociology and psychology but also public policy, as the federal government, state government, and local governments have provided programs to help soldiers who are coming home.

Over the past few months, Jordan conducted oral history interviews with South Dakota combat veterans from World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, and the Mideast Wars.

This week she had the opportunity to learn first hand about the services and programs SDDVA and the VA provide for our heroes and their families.

Special thanks to SDDVA’s Erin Bultje and SFVAHCS’s Shirley Redmond for assisting Jordan this week. Jordan toured the VA facilities, the Sioux Falls Vet Center and the SDDVA Claims Office.

Jordan’s project, when completed, will be shared on line for all to view.

Jordan’s grandfather is a Vietnam Veteran and this project gave Jordan great insight to how she can work to learn more and document stories about her grandfather’s service to this great country.



UPCOMING EVENTS

2018

Mar 29—Vietnam Recognition Ceremony—Black Hills National Cemetery—9:00 am (MT)
Apr 2—State Offices Closed
Apr 27-29—DAV State Convention—The Lodge—Deadwood
May 11—AHEC Improving Veterans Care Conference—University Center—Sioux Falls
May 11—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)
Jun 7-10—American Legion State Convention—Spearfish
Jun 14-17—VFW State Convention—Sioux Falls
Jul 11—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
Jul 12—Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Cemetery Grand Opening—Sisseton—11:00 am (CT)
Jul 13 —VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Education Classroom—Fort Meade—10:00 am (MT)
Jul 14-17—DAV National Convention—Reno, NV
Jul 21-25—VFW National Convention—Kansas City, MO
Jul 26—VABHHCS Veterans Town Hall—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre
Aug 20-24—SDDVA Benefits School—Ramkota—Pierre
Aug 24-30—American Legion National Convention—Minneapolis, MN
Sept 14—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—VFW Post 1273—Rapid City—10:00 am (MT)
Oct 10—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—Soldiers and Sailors Building—Pierre—8:00 am (CT)
Nov 16—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)



Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
South Dakota Department of the Military <http://military.sd.gov>
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <http://vetaffairs.sd.gov>
Soldiers and Sailors Building - 425 E Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-773-8242
E-mail address: audry.ricketts@state.sd.us

